

Developmental Day Center Grant Funds

for Students with Disabilities

Procedures and Instructions

2019-2020

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Procedures and Instructions for Developmental Day Center Grant Funds

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Developmental Day Center Grant Funds – Important Dates At-A-Glance

At the beginning of the school year, PSUs that received DDC Grant Funds during the 2018-2019 school year and hold a current DDC operating license from Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE), will receive a **base allotment**.

September 15, 2019 The three items below are subject to this due date.

- 1) **To apply for DDC Grant Funds**, submit the application and roster/withdrawal forms. Forms are located on the EC Division webpage under the Finance and Grants tab. Select Applications from the menu.
 - The application is to be completed and submitted by the PSU after students' first day of attendance for the 2019-2020 school year.
 - Applications must be submitted on or before September 15, 2019.
 - Applications are processed in the order in which they are received. The emails provide DPI with a date and time stamp for each submission.
 - Incomplete/incorrect applications will be considered "received" when the corrections/missing items are received. If the application or rosters contain incomplete information, the PSU may need to resubmit.
- 2) For students 3 through 21 who transferred to a public-school placement due to a **DDC closure** and there are no other licensed DDCs in the district, complete DDCF-3 Request for Developmental Day Center Priority 3 Funds. A roster/withdrawal form for students who received DDC funds last year and are impacted by the closing will also need to be submitted by the PSU.
 - Priority 3 allocations are for one year only.
 - Approval is subject to the availability of funds.
- 3) If a PSU **received DDC funds for 2018-2019** school year **but is not requesting DDC funds** for 2019-2020 school year, complete DDCF-4 Waiver of Participation form.

October 15, 2019 Final signed **contracts** must be received via email for initial funding of Priority 1 children. Once these are received, and if the application has been approved, remaining funds are disbursed if funds are available.

May 15, 2020 Roster/withdrawal forms are submitted throughout the year as per the instructions included in this manual. May 15th is the **final date for submitting funding requests and withdrawals**.

June 30, 2020 Due date for the **End-of-Year Report** and **roster** listing funded children enrolled on the last day of school. Document the children who will **no longer be served in the DDC in 2020-2021** as withdrawn (e.g., children leaving to attend kindergarten).

Procedures for Applying for Developmental Day Center Grant Funds

DDC Grant Funds are made available through the State Board of Education (SBE) to assist PSUs with providing special education and related services to eligible children with disabilities who are placed by PSUs in licensed DDCs. When grant funds are available, they are accessed via an application process. It is the responsibility of the PSU to request DDC funds from the Exceptional Children Division via the annual application process. Community-based Developmental Day Centers are not to complete the application.

Developmental Day Center Grant Funds are to assist with the educational and related services costs of eligible students, age three to 21, who have a high level of need. Please note that the North Carolina Policies criteria for eligibility is different than eligibility for DDC Grant Funds. More than two decades ago, the legislative intent behind the initiation of these funds was to support a system change in North Carolina to move children enrolled in separate residential hospitals back into their homes and community school systems. These children had severe handicaps. Eligibility criteria is in place to ensure that DDC Grant Funds are provided for children with a high level of need who are served by the PSU.

The Application

Beginning October 21, 2019, the MS Word fillable applications must be emailed as a password protected document to the SpecialGrants@dpi.nc.gov email address. Applications sent postal mail will not be accepted for the 2019-2020 school year. EC Division personnel will review applicant students' supporting documentation in ECATS. Other supporting documentation such as contracts are also to be emailed as per directions in this manual. If additional information is needed, the PSU EC Director/Coordinator will be contacted.

Password Protected Email Instructions

- If compatible encryption is not available to both parties, data should be password protected. The password should be given to the recipient through a different medium, such as a phone call. Never provide the password in notes or documents accompanying the actual data file, or another email. Additionally, the password should not be transferred via voicemail.
- When protecting the document with a password, go to File>Info>protect document, in the dropdown. Select Encrypt with password. A box will populate for you to enter a password (passwords are case sensitive).
- Once the document is password protected, save the document as PSU#_PSUName_type of document (i.e. application, roster, contract, etc.) and then email it to specialgrants@dpi.nc.gov

Applications **must be submitted within 60 days** of the student's first day of attendance or the date of the documented change in condition. The last day to submit an application is May 15, 2020. The emailed application provides the EC Division with a date and time stamp of the applications submitted.

The application and update form include signature fields for the EC Director/Coordinator, Finance Officer and Superintendent. Obtain all signatures prior to emailing.

Per child DDC Grant Fund amounts provided by the SBE for the 2019-2020 school year are:

- \$5.00 per month to assist the PSU with funding educational supplies, materials, and equipment;
and
- \$999.10 per month to assist the PSU with funding educational and related services costs.

Note: Total funds allocated to the PSU are rounded to the nearest dollar per procedural requirements for State Funds.

Funds are allotted in monthly increments based upon months remaining in the school year at the time of an eligible student's first day of attendance during the current school year. A funding cycle begins on the 16th of one month and ends on the 15th of the following month (e.g. October 16 to November 15). The funds are to be applied toward licensed teachers, assistant teachers and applicable related service providers who are serving the funded students.

Note: Many DDCs are blended classrooms; therefore, a child may be attending a DDC and not be eligible for funding on the first day of attendance (e.g. the child is not yet identified and placed in an exceptional children program or does not have a current IEP). When a child is found eligible by the IEP Team and placed in an EC program, or the IEP becomes current, the date of the meeting is the date he/she may become eligible for funding. The date the child begins attending the DDC after the IEP Team meeting is the first day of attendance as a student eligible for DDC Grant Funds.

The **base allotment** provides three months of funding for a PSU that received DDC Grant Funds during the previous year, and the centers involved have a current DDC license according to DCDEE (DPI periodically receives a list of centers holding an active DDC license from DCDEE). The allotment is calculated using the number of children served in each PSU DDC at the end of the previous school year:

number of students enrolled on the last day of previous year x 3 months x \$1,004.10 = 3 month allotment

The **remaining funds** will be allocated after the current year's DDC application, roster of eligible children and contract (when applicable) has been submitted, reviewed and approved, and when funds are available. Occasionally, there is a delay due to Legislative approval of the State budget. Funding is calculated according to the number of eligible students submitted by the PSU on the application and roster/withdrawal forms. The base allotment is subtracted from the total amount due:

number of eligible students submitted x 10 months x \$1,004.10 – base allotment = remaining funds due

DDC Licensing is conducted through DCDEE. The Department of Public Instruction (DPI) is not involved with the licensing process. Submitting a copy of the license certificate is part of the application process. See "Instructions for Completing a Developmental Day Center Funds Application."

In order for a PSU to receive DDC Grant Funds for eligible children, the DDC must have a DDC license that is not "provisional." A license in "Provisional" status is viewed as a type of corrective action resulting from a center being noncompliant. The PSU is responsible for ensuring that a community-based center has a current and non-provisional license as part of their contracting process. For DDCs under a provisional license, eligible children may receive prorated funding based upon the date the provisional status is removed and the regular/clear operating license is issued. A copy of actual certificate must be scanned and sent as an attachment via email as stated above.

New centers are provided a "Temporary" license. Such a center is pending a clear license as they await the date of the final inspection of the facility. Once a new center passes inspection and is no longer operating under a "Temporary" license, a regular/clear operating license is issued. Eligible children may receive funding while attending a center that is licensed as temporary. Once the center receives a clear license, within 10 days of receipt, a copy of the actual certificate must be scanned and sent as an attachment via email as stated above.

If a clear license is not obtained, the PSU is responsible for notifying the SPD section via email. The DDC Grant Funds allocated for the funded students at that center will be reverted.

The Department of Health and Human Services/Division of Child Development Early Education must approve DDC expansions/relocations.

Educational Placement and Services: The PSU, through an Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team, determines educational placement and services, including the student's service delivery model. The IEP Team's decisions are based on the least restrictive environment and what is deemed educationally appropriate for each student. A DDC classroom is a more restrictive environment than a Pre-K classroom due to the smaller staff:child ratio. The staff:child ratio for a DDC classroom is 1:6. It is 1:9 for a Pre-K classroom.

The PSU is ultimately responsible for implementation of the IEP and related services of any student placed in a DDC, which includes providing a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment and ensuring parental rights. DDC placements should not be based on the availability of DDC grant funds from the Exceptional Children Division but on the needs of the child according to his/her IEP.

- If children are placed in a community-based DDC, the PSU is expected to consistently monitor the progress of the students and ensure the IEP is current and appropriately implemented.

DDC funds may not be used for extended day or extended school year services, before/after school care or day care services, teacher work days or other days when PSU children are not in school. The PSU's traditional school calendar determines the days when children are not in attendance.

Educational Compliance: When a PSU contracts with a DDC, the PSU must provide verification to the Exceptional Children Division that each child with disabilities is being served by the DDC and receiving services as outlined in an appropriate IEP. The PSU will:

- Conduct periodic visits to monitor children's progress and ensure the placement is the least restrictive.
 - Maintain records of visits and progress monitoring.
- Maintain a budget and cost report for contracted special education and related service provisions for children with disabilities.
 - Maintain accurate records of children enrolled and their expenditures, to include invoices from the contracted DDC.
 - Report withdrawn children within 10 days and submit funding requests for new children within 60 days.
- When requested, provide to the Exceptional Children Division the necessary supporting documents demonstrating eligibility for all children with disabilities being served by the DDC.
- Conduct an educational compliance review of the contracted DDC at least once during the contract period. The review is to include a check of the type of license held by each teacher (i.e., Birth through Kindergarten (B-K) or Preschool Add-On for children in preschool, or Adapted Curriculum for school-age children).

Children's Eligibility Criteria: Developmental Day Center Funds are to assist with the educational and related service costs of students, age three to 21, who have a high level of need. The North Carolina Policies criteria for eligibility is different than eligibility for DDC funding. Funding eligibility criteria is to ensure the funds are provided for students with a high level of need. DDC Grant Funds are student specific and may only be used for approved students placed in appropriately licensed DDCs.

Children served in a DDC infant-toddler program who are turning three years old, must have their educational placement reviewed for continued services in a DDC program. A child does not automatically receive approval to remain in the DDC for preschool disability services; continued placement in the DDC must be based on the child's educational needs and determined by an IEP Team.

Documentation in ECATS will be reviewed by DPI personnel verify that eligibility criteria for each child is met. If additional information is needed, the PSU will be notified.

Children ages 6 to 21:

To be eligible for DDC Grant Funds, a student, 6 to 21 years of age, **must meet all five of the following criteria:**

1. Present with a significant cognitive disability;
 - A child has a significant cognitive disability if he/she exhibits severe and pervasive delays in ALL areas of conceptual, linguistic and academic development and also in adaptive behavior areas, such as communication, daily living skills, and self-care. Children in this category require supervision at all times beyond the general supervision provided in school settings.
2. Be placed by an IEP team in a DDC setting as the least restrictive environment;
3. Have a current IEP that documents the need for special education five days a week and receives a minimum of 4 hours per day of specially designed instruction;
4. Receive at least one weekly related service (e.g. a related service is provided 9 times during a 9 week grading period). Transportation is excluded as a related service option for this purpose.
5. Students receiving this funding must have deficits in all areas that are not the result of a language barrier or lack of instruction.

Children ages 3 to 5:

To be eligible for DDC Grant Funds, a student, 3 to 5 years of age, **must meet all three of the following criteria:**

1. Be diagnosed as having one of the following as a primary disability:
 - Significant developmental delay;
 - The child with a Developmental Delay must exhibit at least a 30% delay (2 SD below the mean) in two or more areas of development, or a 45% (3 SD below the mean) delay in one area of development.
 - Autism, and exhibit at least a 25% delay (1.5 SD below the mean) in two or more areas of development;
 - Deaf-Blindness, and exhibit at least a 25% delay (1.5 SD below the mean) in one or more area of development;
 - Deafness, and exhibit at least a 25% delay (1.5 SD below the mean) in one or more areas of development;
 - Hearing Impairment, and exhibit at least a 25% delay (1.5 SD below the mean) in one or more areas of development;
 - Visually Impairment including Blindness, and exhibit at least a 25% delay (1.5 SD below the mean) in one or more areas of development;
 - Multiple Disabilities;
 - Other Health Impairment, and exhibit at least a 25% delay (1.5 SD below the meant) in two or more areas of development, or 45% (3 SD below the mean) in one area;
 - Orthopedic Impairment, and exhibit at least a 25% delay (1.5 SD below the meant) in two or more areas of development, or 45% (3 SD below the mean) in one area;
 - Traumatic Brain Injury;
 - Other disability areas are not common within the preschool population but will be considered using the above criteria as a guide when reviewing the child's documentation.
2. Be placed by an IEP Team in a DDC setting as the least restrictive environment.
3. Require special education five days a week plus one of the following:
 - at least three hours each day of specially designed instruction; or
 - at least two hours each day of specially designed instruction with at least one weekly related service (e.g. a related service is provided at least 9 times during a 9 week grading period). Transportation is excluded as a related service option for this purpose.
 - or
 - at least one hour each day of specially designed instruction with at least two weekly related services (e.g. each related service is provided at least 9 times during a 9 week grading period). Transportation is excluded as a related service option for this purpose.

Applying for DDC Funds: The PSU is the only agency that may request DDC funds, and only eligible students who have begun to attend during the current school year are to be included on the application and roster. The information listed below must be submitted annually, no later than September 15, 2019, to request Developmental Day Center Grant Funds. Incorrect or incomplete information could delay funding. Newly licensed centers may submit an application during the school year, but funding is contingent on the availability of funds.

Application submission consists of the items listed below. It is best to complete the Developmental Day Center Roster/Withdrawal Form first since the total number of students is needed to answer questions on the application.

1) Developmental Day Center Roster/Withdrawal Form

- The roster is completed via the fillable MS Word document located on the EC Division webpage under the Finance and Grants tab. Select Applications from the menu.
 - Students are submitted individually.
 - PSU will need to print a copy of each submission report for their records. The submissions **will not** be published as a list of students.

TIP: The development of a spreadsheet of DDC students will allow the PSU to maintain an active list of students attending, each DDC name and location of students, funding for each student, enrollment date and withdrawal date. For PSUs contracting with a DDC, the spreadsheet could also include monthly invoices and payments made.

- Documentation supporting the eligibility of children listed on the roster will be verified in ECATS by EC Division personnel.
- If additional information is needed, the PSU will be notified.

2) Developmental Day Center Grant Funds Application

- The application is completed via the fillable MS Word document located on the EC Division webpage under the Finance and Grants tab. Select Applications from the menu.
- The application and update form include signature fields for the EC Director/Coordinator, Finance Officer and Superintendent. Obtain all signatures prior to emailing.
- The PSU is to retain a copy of the submission for their records, and a copy is to be provided to the contracted community-based DDC by the PSU when the PSU has contracted with such an agency.

3) Copy of the DDC license certificate. See “Instructions for Completing a Developmental Day Center Funds Application.”

4) Contract between the PSU and community-based DDC with appropriate signatures is due before October 15, 2019. Applications will not be approved without the contract. See “Instructions for Completing a Developmental Day Center Funds Application.”

- A contract is not required for PSUs that have classrooms/centers licensed as DDCs. A PSU DDC is not a contracted entity; therefore, a contract is not necessary.

Contracts: If the IEP Team decides a community-based DDC setting is the least restrictive environment for a student, all educational and related services are to be negotiated locally and included in the annual contract between the PSU and DDC.

- The DDC may share with the PSU their rate schedules, estimated costs for meeting students’ needs, parent handbook, and other information provided to enrolling families as part of the contract negotiation discussions.
- The needs and services of the enrolling children, and the costs of the required services, would also be part of the contract negotiation discussions. The DDC may provide data to support the cost of the services at the center.
- Review of the contract terms must be made available to the community-based DDC prior to obtaining contract signatures.

- The negotiation of contracts is a local responsibility. DDC-PSU contracts are to include the following information:
 - The appropriate monthly cost factors for each child served in the DDC, to include how excess costs will be paid. Note: DDC grant funds may not cover the entire cost of DDC services. DDC grant funds are intended to supplement, not supplant, federal, state and local per child funds the PSU is already receiving.
 - The educational and related services each child will be receiving as per each student's IEP are to be described in the contract, including the start and end date of the school year.
 - After all negotiations have been completed, the contract has been reviewed by both parties, and both parties are in agreement, the contract is signed.
 - A copy of the signed contract is to be provided to the community-based DDC by the PSU.
 - A complete and current PSU school year calendar is also to be provided with the contract. The calendar's purpose is to communicate which days PSU children are not to attend school at the DDC at the PSU's expense (e.g. teacher work days, holidays).
- Any legislative increase/decrease should be included in teachers' salaries and reflected in the cost per child per month for a 10-month period.

A contract template is provided with the links to the on-line application forms. It is an editable MS Word document. If the template is used, the specific terms negotiated by both parties would need to be added.

Approval notification of students receiving grant funds will be provided to the PSU Exceptional Children Program Director/Coordinator via a memo.

If the **request is denied**, the PSU Exceptional Children Program Director will be notified via a memo indicating the reason for denial.

Additional students after submitting the initial application: Within sixty (60) calendar days of a student's first day of attendance, a *Developmental Day Center Roster/Withdrawal Form* is to be submitted. Requests are processed in the order in which they are received. Incomplete or incorrect information may result in funding delays or denials. Late submissions may result in prorated allocations. Grant Funds are not guaranteed and contingent upon the availability of funds.

Withdrawals or changes in services: Within ten (10) calendar days of any change in a student's status or eligible required services, a *Developmental Day Center Roster/Withdrawal Form* is to be submitted. Unused funds, measured according to the months remaining in the school year at the time of the change, will be applied toward newly submitted students by EC Division personnel.

End-of-Year Summative Report: The report contains information requested in the application to obtain a financial snap-shot of the end of the year for each DDC.

Included on the report is a field for noting the date of the required annual educational compliance review of contracted DDCs. The review's purpose is to ensure the center holds a current license and the staff serving the PSU's students meet licensing requirements. There are additional fields for recording any other visits the PSU made to the contracted DDC to monitor children's progress or provide support or training to DDC personnel.

The DDC child data must be submitted by the PSU. The total children indicated on the report will equal the totals from the year's roster submissions. Secondly, submit a **roster of all eligible, funded children enrolled on the last day of school. Note the children who will no longer be served in the DDC in 2020-2021** (e.g. children leaving to attend kindergarten) as withdrawn. The end-of-year information is used to calculate the PSU's three month DDC base allotment for the upcoming school year.

Certification and signatures: The application and End-of-Year Summative Report include fields for signature Certifications from the EC Director/Coordinator, Finance Officer and Superintendent.

Reference III

Fiscal Requirements for Developmental Day Center Funds PRC 063/036

1. Developmental Day Center Funds are grant funds for assisting PSUs in providing special education and related services to eligible students served in a DDC. PSUs are to apply other per child state and federal funds (state and federal child count funds, ADM funds, or local funds) for providing a free appropriate public education to students placed in a developmental day center setting. The PSU can also provide some or all of the required services.
2. The amount paid to a contracted DDC by the PSU is negotiated locally and is to be stated in the contract.
3. The allotment of DDC grant funds is contingent upon the availability of state funds for this program. The unavailability of DDC funds does not relinquish a PSU's responsibility for providing a free appropriate public education in the least restrictive environment for children.
4. DDC placements must not be based on the availability of DDC grant funds from the Exceptional Children Division, but on the needs of the child as outlined in his/her IEP. When a student is placed in a DDC, and grant funds are not available, the PSU is to use other local, state and federal funds to pay for the costs of the educational services. Furthermore, PSU nonpayment of rendered services is not an option when grant funds are not available.
5. Personnel employed by local boards of education and placed in a DDC may be employed for ten (10) months.
6. DDC funds are provided to the PSU in Program Report Code (PRC 063).
7. DDC funds are allocated per child via the application process and cannot be split (shared) between children.
8. DDC funds must be used to provide special education and related services; funds are to be applied toward the salaries of teachers, teacher assistants, and related services personnel serving the active students named on the roster/withdrawal form(s), and/or the invoices for these services.
9. Only when the monthly cost per child is less than the monthly grant amount, and the PSU is contracting with a community-based DDC, no more than ten (10) percent of the monthly per child grant fund amount may be used by the community-based DDC for administrative purposes (e.g. office personnel, office supplies and materials). If the calculation in the application is a negative number (1,004.10 minus monthly cost per child) , the cost per child exceeds the grant amount and the PSU is not eligible for administrative costs.
10. Funding is based on the PSU traditional school year calendar. Therefore, the date a student enters the DDC determines the amount of funding the PSU will receive. Students entering the DDC on or before September 15th will receive ten months of funding. Students entering the DDC after September 15th will receive prorated funding. Students' enrollment dates as eligible grant applicants must reflect the current school year.
11. DDC Grant Funds cannot be used to pay for expenses from prior years or for services that will be provided in the following fiscal year.

12. DDC Grant Funds will be allotted according to the priorities described below. Grant funds are not guaranteed, and available funds are distributed according to a prioritized sequence. The Exceptional Children Division will begin processing all requests for Priority 1 children after October 15, 2019, in the order in which they are received, for PSUs with a complete application. Next, Priority 2 children are funded with funds available. Priority 3 funds are allocated after Priority 1 and 2 children have been funded if there are remaining funds. After all priorities have been funded and funds remain, newly enrolled eligible children submitted through May 15th are funded according to the date/time stamp of the roster. Funds are allocated until exhausted.

Priority 1: Eligible children ages 3 through 21, served in a licensed DDC during the previous school year and will remain in a licensed DDC for the current school year.

Priority 2: Eligible children ages 3 through 21, identified as needing services of a DDC for the first time in the current school year. Funding is contingent upon the availability of funds, and allocations occur after Priority 1 children have been funded.

Priority 3: PSUs that contracted with a community-based DDC during the previous school year are eligible for Priority 3 funds if the community-based center closes for the current school year **and** no other DDCs are operating in the area. The allocation will be based on the number of children funded the previous school year. This funding is available for one year only for children ages 3 through 21. After one year of Priority 3 funding, the PSU is expected to provide educational services for the children through state, federal or local funds available for children with disabilities.